



Photo by Rudy Purificato

Blue Santa coordinator Daniel Valdez (left) and San Antonio police officer Ear Tovar process donated toys at Brooks City-Base. The toy drive is one of many supported by Brooks employees, including Toys for Tots, Brooks Cares, Angel Tree and Elf Louise.

Brooks houses nation's oldest Panama Canal hyperbaric chamber

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

While over a century old, the recompression chamber housed in Building 160 continues to make history as the longest continually operating device in America used in hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

Originally built in 1903 by the Berkeley Steel Corporation at a cost of \$2,666.47, it was used by legions of workers who built the Panama Canal from 1904-1914. Many of the 50,000-man army of canal builders, under the supervision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, owe their lives to this device which was used to treat victims of caisson disease, also known by divers as "the bends."

Caisson disease, the original name for decompression sickness at depth, derives its name from the submergible pressurized air chamber used by workers to build bridge and canal infrastructures while underwater. Prolonged exposure to pressure at depth produced adverse physiological problems. The nickname "the bends" comes from the disease's most pronounced symptoms characterized by severe muscle and joint pain.

Caisson workers' disease, as it is also called, produced a variety of other symptoms including deafness, vomiting, labored breathing, paralysis called 'diver's palsy,' fainting and in some cases sudden death. Pressurized oxygen therapy, via the recompression chamber, saved the lives of many canal workers who had succumbed to this insidious malady.

RELATED STORY:

Air Force hyperbaric medicine innovations advance worldwide therapy — Page 17

Owned by the Panama Canal Company, the device known today as the Panama Canal chamber, was installed on a floating barge as a medical emergency 'vehicle' during construction of the 50.72 mile-long canal.

It was sparingly used after the Panama Canal was officially opened on Aug. 15, 1914. However, 40 years later the Panama Canal Company loaned it to the Air Force as a temporary fix while a new high altitude chamber was being built at Howard Air Force Base, Panama.

In 1966, an Air Force Logistics Center team from Hill AFB, Utah, inspected the 15,000 pound Panama Canal chamber and deemed it worthy for Air Force use. However, it needed to be refurbished.

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Blue Santa opens 'workshop' at Brooks

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

The San Antonio Police Department is getting an early start on the Christmas season in anticipation of helping needy families in San Antonio, as well as Hurricane Katrina evacuees who have moved from motels to temporary housing this week.

"We began collecting donations on Nov. 1. We're expecting there will be a greater need this year because there are (an additional) several thousand people living in San Antonio because of Hurricane Katrina," said Blue Santa coordinator Daniel Valdez.

Last year, Brooks hosted for the first time Blue Santa operations at the old fire station. This year, hundreds of donated toys and thousands of pounds of food are already being stored for processing in Bldg. 8015 on Crouch Road.

The San Antonio Police Officers Association founded Blue Santa in 1976. Since then, San Antonio police officers have distributed tens of thousands of Blue Santa holiday gift bags filled with toys and food.

"In 2004, we supported 4,200 families that included 18,000 children," Officer Valdez said, noting that 1,200 families had already signed up before Thanksgiving this year for Blue Santa visits.

Families must register for Blue Santa at a police substation in their area. "We're no longer taking phone requests," he said. Blue Santa requests are put into a central data bank shared by other holiday charitable organizations such as Elf Louise, the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots and the Salvation Army. "It worked well last year in preventing duplication," the Blue Santa coordinator said, referring to some families that tried to sign up with more than one charitable organization. With costs soaring, organizations such as

Blue Santa must maximize precious resources. Blue Santa's annual budget is between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

"Some families request toys only. They don't want food," Officer Valdez explained, noting that unwrapped toy donations are not in short supply.

What is in short supply is food. "We buy our food from the San Antonio Food Bank. Hurricane Katrina evacuees have nearly emptied the food bank. For the first time, we won't have meat, such as tuna,

to put in our Blue Santa bags," Officer Valdez said. However, gift bags will include for the first time fruit along with usual holiday fare such as vegetables and soup.

Blue Santa relies on business and individual donations. Cash donations, in the form of tax deductible checks or money orders, are welcome along

with toys. While Blue Santa buys the bulk of its toys from a retail distributor, non-profit organizations have historically helped the police department fulfill all Blue Santa requests. Among them is Reagan High School that has for the past few years held a Blue Santa toy drive, Officer Valdez noted. "Individual donations make a big difference," he said about its importance to Blue Santa operations.

What Blue Santa workers don't need are additional volunteers to help bag toys and food. "We have police officers to do that along with Cellular on Patrol and Volunteers in Policing," Officer Valdez said. Blue Santa gift bag distribution will be conducted from Dec. 23 through Christmas.

Cash donations are accepted year-round, Officer Valdez said. Contact Cynthia Uriegas on the Blue Santa hotline at 207-7175 for more information. The mailing address for monetary donations, written to Blue Santa on checks or money orders, is: Chief of Police Office, 214 West Nueva St., Attention - Blue Santa.



Photo by Rudy Purificato

A truckload of donated toys is unloaded by members of the San Antonio Police Department during last year's Blue Santa toy drive.



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The *Discovery* is published by *Prime Time Inc.*, a private firm in no way connected with the United States Air Force, under exclusive contract with Brooks City-Base, Texas.

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Everything in this publication is edited, prepared and provided by the 311th Human Systems Wing Public Affairs Office of Brooks City-Base. Material for the *Discovery* should be typewritten, double-spaced and submitted to 311HSW/PA, 2510 Kennedy Circle, Brooks City-Base, TX 78235-5115 by noon the Wednesday prior to the week of publication. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated. Articles may also be submitted by fax by calling 536-3235 or by e-mail.

Articles may be submitted by email to Kendahl.Johnson@brooks.af.mil or to Discovery@brooks.af.mil.

The *Discovery* is published every other week on Friday. Contact the editor at 536-5141 for more information.

Discovery advertising

Deadline for display advertising is noon the Friday preceding the publication date. To advertise in the *Discovery*, call 675-4500 or send advertising copy to *Prime Time Military Newspapers*, P.O. Box 27040, San Antonio, Texas 78227.



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Airmen still making the choice to serve

By Lt. Col. Steve Matson

96th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron commander

From the onset of the Eisenhower presidency in 1953 — through 1992 — the United States military intervened in world events some 51 times. From 1992 through 2000, they had an additional 51 interventions.

Notably, throughout the 1990s, U.S. forces were involved in peacekeeping, peace enforcement, humanitarian relief and extended low-intensity operations — in addition to war-fighting duties.

As many Airmen know from personal sacrifice — since 2001 — the mighty B-52 Stratofortress and its aviators and maintainers have been deployed fighting and supporting the global war on terrorism.

The expansion in responsibilities around the world has resulted in an approximate 400 percent increase in U.S. security commitments — while our armed services have concurrently downsized by approximately 40 percent.

Quite simply, we really are doing more with less.

With this change in responsibilities and increased operations, it would be easy to explain how numbers of new Airmen are declining. But this is just the opposite.

People are still choosing to serve — and choosing to serve in record numbers.

Our military is made up of people from many different parts of the globe with widely varying backgrounds. However, we all have one thing in common: We all made the choice to serve our great nation.

There are as many reasons to serve as the varied backgrounds of those who chose to serve. But the one commonality is that we all made the choice. We made the choice to join the profession of arms.

The reason is not important. What's important is that you made the choice and you are serving with pride and honor.

Our nation has called on the military for involvement in more than 100 operations in the last 50 years. And it is Airmen like you that make that mission succeed.

Our Airmen place themselves in harm's way every day, faithfully defending our nation and our way of life.

Regardless of your reasoning — whether it is a calling for patriotic duty, a family tradition, desire to learn a trade, or simply that it is the right thing to do — you are the ones that answered the call of our nation.

Thank you for your choice to serve.

The last gasp of the dinosaurs

(Editor's note: This article is part of a continuing series of articles highlighting the best board game alternatives for classic yet tired games like Monopoly, Clue and Risk.)

By Kendahl Johnson

Discovery editor

Games Magazine awarded Evo its prestigious Game of the Year award in 2002. With a fun-filled theme, high player interaction and a low learning curve, the game deserves the award.

In Evo, players control a race of dinosaurs. They attempt to help the dinosaurs adapt and survive the constant changes of climates. Players who are most successful in helping their dinosaurs evolve to the changing climates are awarded mutation points, and the player with the most points wins the game.

The game lasts about 10 turns, with each turn having six phases — initiative, climate, movement, births, survival and mutations. During the initiative phase, the turn order is determined. The player with the longest tail goes first, with ties broken first by whoever has the fewest dinos on the board and then by the roll of the die. In the next phase, the moderate climate zone is determined based on the roll of a die and marked on a climate chart.

The board is made up of hexes representing the different climates. In the movement phase, players are allowed to move their dinos to "safe" hexes. Then adult dinos give birth to baby dinos, based on the number of eggs a player's dino has. Finally, dino survival is determined. All dinosaurs in the moderate zone survive. Dinos in other zones may or may not survive based on mutations earned in previous turns. Dinos that do not survive the climate are removed from the board. For each remaining dino on the board, a player earns one mutation point.

During the final phase of a turn, dinosaur mutations are auctioned to the players. Mutations are drawn randomly from a bag, and include fur (allows a dino to survive in one climate zone colder than the moderate zone), parasols (allows a dino to survive in one climate zone hotter than the moderate zone), horns (increases combat ability), legs (provides an additional movement point), mutant genes (upgrades cost one less point), eggs and tails. Occasionally, an event card will be included in the auction.

Complexity: This is your true family game — easy to play and understand, and outright fun. It takes a few turns to get used to the climate chart and understanding the hot, cold and moderate zones. But overall, there isn't anything about the game that will be too difficult for youngsters. Plus, the game plays in 60-90 minutes so length won't be an issue with the younger kids with short attention spans. Also, the game scales well from 3-5 players; there are two reversible boards,

so the size of the playing area can be adjusted to the number of players.

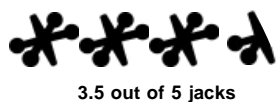
Event cards: At the beginning of the game, each player receives three event cards that can be used during the game. Players can only receive additional cards through the auction. These cards introduce a degree of chaos into the dinosaur world. They range from events that help you, events that affect climate and the really nasty events that hurt your opponent's dinos. Strategies will be ruined by the timely play of a nasty event card, and although they cause moans and groans, the cards aren't truly vicious.

Mutation auction: The bidding for dino upgrades is arguably the best part of the game. There is one fewer mutation available than there are players, so one player will miss out on an upgrade each turn. This creates some tense moments, because being left out of an auction early can leave you behind. Yet, auctions are paid for by mutation points, so knowing how much to pay for an upgrade is also a tough decision.

Movement and combat: My biggest criticism with the game, and the reason it didn't rate four jacks, is the movement and combat aspect of Evo. Too often, there really was just one option when moving dinosaurs. You are trying to move all your dinosaurs to survival zones and since those zones are limited, often movement becomes a formality rather than a strategic opportunity.

When a player moves into an occupied zone, combat takes place, but attacks are a rarity. The attacker is at too much of a disadvantage. When the dinosaurs have equal horns, the attacker wins on a roll of one or two. With one additional horn, chances of success increase, but the attacker still loses on a roll of five or six. Since the losing dinosaur is removed from the board, there is not enough incentive to risk losing an attack. The best strategy seems to be playing it safe by avoiding all confrontation. This is okay in a nice family game, but it seems there should be a higher reward to risk factor when attacking.

Despite a few criticisms, I still recommend Evo, particularly for families. It's strong in player interaction with an excellent dinosaur theme. The game also scores above average marks in the "fun factor" category. There is a degree of luck and an element of chaos, but not enough that good players won't be rewarded for advanced planning and strategizing. I would like to experiment with some house rules which might improve the game, but overall it's a highly entertaining family board game.



3.5 out of 5 jacks



AFMC generals ‘spread the word’ on Force Shaping

By Ron Scharven
Air Force Materiel Command Public Affairs

In less than one year, almost 2,000 young officers in many career fields will be told to hang up their blue suit and be involuntarily separated from the Air Force in order to balance the officer overages. This action will be conducted using a Force Shaping board. To ensure each officer is told of the board’s concept and action, each MAJCOM was asked to create a “Spread the Word” team. The Air Force Materiel Command team, selected by Gen. Bruce Carlson, AFMC commander, is Brig. Gen. Kathie Close and Lt. Col. Cheryl Malone.

“The decision was made to turn off the enlisted accession pipeline in 2005 and the Air Force was able to meet the Fiscal Year 2005 end strength,” General Close explained, “but that created an imbalance between the enlisted and officer force mainly in company grade officers in the 2001 through 2004 year groups.”

She said the Air Force was able to pay for these overages with supplemental monies. But the imbalance has, in essence, caused the enlisted force to pay for the officer overages.

There were several volunteer programs and initiatives instituted, such as waiving active duty service commitments but the programs didn’t quite reach the desired goals. Several other options were looked at but the Air Force decided to conduct a force shaping board that impacts ’02 and ’03 year groups.

To prepare the MAJCOM Spread the Word teams, the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, conducted a force shaping training session.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alfonso Ramirez Jr.

Brig. Gen. Kathie Close of the Air Force Materiel Command briefs Brooks City-Base leaders and some lieutenants affected by Force Shaping. Soon nearly 2,000 young officers will be involuntarily separated from the Air Force in order to balance officer overages.

The training covered a myriad of topics as to why we have the challenges we face today, who was going to be impacted, what year groups, the Air Force Specialty Codes affected, and how the Force Shaping board is going to be conducted. It also covered the volunteer programs such as Palace Chase, the Blue to Green programs, civil service opportunities and limited active duty waivers.

Two briefings were created; one for the base leadership and the other was for the officers affected. “I give the executive briefing to the leadership and Colonel Malone conducts the mass briefings,” General Close said. “The mass briefing is about a 45-minute long scripted briefing, and with the questions and answers, the session runs about 2 hours. This ensures that everyone in the Air Force gets the same word at the same time.”

“Because of the dates of the board, we will have briefed everyone affected in AFMC by Nov. 18, since it will be determined March 1 who will have to be force shaped,” General Close said. “The board will meet in April of next year, the results will be released June 1 and those officers selected to be involuntarily separated from the Air

Force will have an established separation date of Sept. 29. We are trying to give them as much information possible to help them make that crucial decision and transition as easily as possible,” the general said.

General Close said that we need to do

everything from a leadership perspective to provide these officers every opportunity and resource to transition them from the military to the civilian world, civil service, the enlisted ranks, the Guard or Reserves or to another service.

“I truly believe that these officers have the skills the civilian community wants: they are disciplined, trained, they have leadership experience their peers on the outside don’t possess, they have the training to successfully run large programs, and these are very marketable skills in the civilian community,” General Close said.

According to Colonel Malone, there are only two AFSCs that the officers in the 2002 and 2003 year groups can cross-train into; navigator and developmental engineers. Of course, they would have to meet the academic and physical requirements.

“If the officer was prior enlisted, a boarded officer will have the opportunity to return to their old AFSC, based on the needs of the Air Force, and at the enlisted rank they held upon entering Officer Training School, Colonel Malone explained.

“Officers selected to be involuntarily separated from the Air Force will have an established separation date of Sept. 29.”

Brig. Gen. Kathie Close
Interim Chief of Safety

“This is a new generation,” General Close said, “they really have a sense of patriotism and

commitment – a warrior-type attitude, it’s not just a job to them.”

“This is a wingman issue. These officers have to make a crucial decision, and in many cases, a family decision, and it is up to us to give them all the help possible to make that decision,” General Close said.



Panama Canal chamber finds home at Brooks

Continued from page 1
bished at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars. Among the changes made was replacing the original wooden floor with a steel grate.

It was temporarily housed at Albrook AFB, headquarters for Air Force Southern Command. The Air Force eventually purchased it for the depreciated cost of \$842.65 because the other option of buying a new chamber would have been too costly.

In a Nov. 5, 1965, letter written by Air Force Southern Command’s Staff Judge Advocate, Lt. Col. John Van Voorhis, he observes, “The purchase and installation of a new recompression chamber would cost the Air Force approximately \$30,000.”

On March 8, 1967, the Panama Canal chamber was officially transferred



Photo by Rudy Purificato

The 1903 Panama Canal chamber, housed in Bldg. 160, draws many visitors to the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine hyperbaric treatment facility. Former Davis hyperbaric lab chief Lt. Col. William Butler (left) shows the chamber to a Croatia scientific team in 1997.

to the Air Force. It would eventually find a new home at Brooks AFB when the Air Force Hyperbaric Center was established here. Besides decompression sickness, the 13 x 6-and-a-half-foot, two-place Panama Canal cham-

ber was used by U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine hyperbaric pioneers, Drs. Jared Dunn, Richard Heimbach and Jefferson Davis, to treat refractory chronic bone infections, known as osteomyelitis.

Exercise equipment sent to troops

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The deployed troops in Afghanistan will receive some much needed exercise equipment thanks to Steven Carlyon, 88th Mission Support Group Services Division director, and the prompt action taken by Chief Master Sgt. Ed Salinas, of Air Force Materiel Command Installations and Mission Support.

Mr. Carlyon suggested the machines could be sent overseas to help boost morale, and Chief Salinas quickly had the idea approved.

More than 7,000 pounds of free weight equipment were sent to fly to Kandahar and Bagram by the end of this month. Among the dozen pieces planned for shipping were a rotary chest press, lat pulldown, tricep extension and leg machines.

“First off, I would like to thank Wright-Patt for offering up the fitness equipment,” said Master Sgt. Adam Osborn. “We found a home for the equipment at our two neediest sights.”

The donated machinery came out of the health club in the basement of the AFMC headquarters, which had obtained year-end funds to upgrade its equipment.

New contingency aeromedical staging facility opens

SOUTHWEST ASIA — The “gateway” for patients awaiting transportation to Germany just got a little better when the 386th Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility staff opened the doors to their new facility.

The state-of-the-art facility, which opened Nov. 23, now offers patients a more comfortable environment to relax after serving their country in combat throughout the area of responsibility.

The CASF, one of two in the AOR, is designed to accommodate patients for 24 to 72 hours before being airlifted to Germany for other medical care. The 39-

member CASF team includes four doctor, seven nurses, 17 nurse technicians and 11 administrative and support personnel. Their mission is to continue medical care and ensure the patients are stable so they can be airlifted. Since its activation in June 2004, the CASF has cared for more than 3, 700 patients.

According to Lt. Col. Joe Kennedy, 386th CASF commander, the new facility is designed to hold 25 patients with a surge capability of approximately 50 patients. Additionally, the 9,900-square-foot facility is nearly double the size of the old tent-based facility.

“The new CASF will be very spacious for the patients as well as the staff,” said the colonel. “It’s nice to have a permanent building which will be much cleaner and quieter than the old tent.”

According to Senior Master Sgt. Anthony Weary, CASF superintendent, the new CASF offers a variety of advantages over the old facility, especially when it comes to dust.

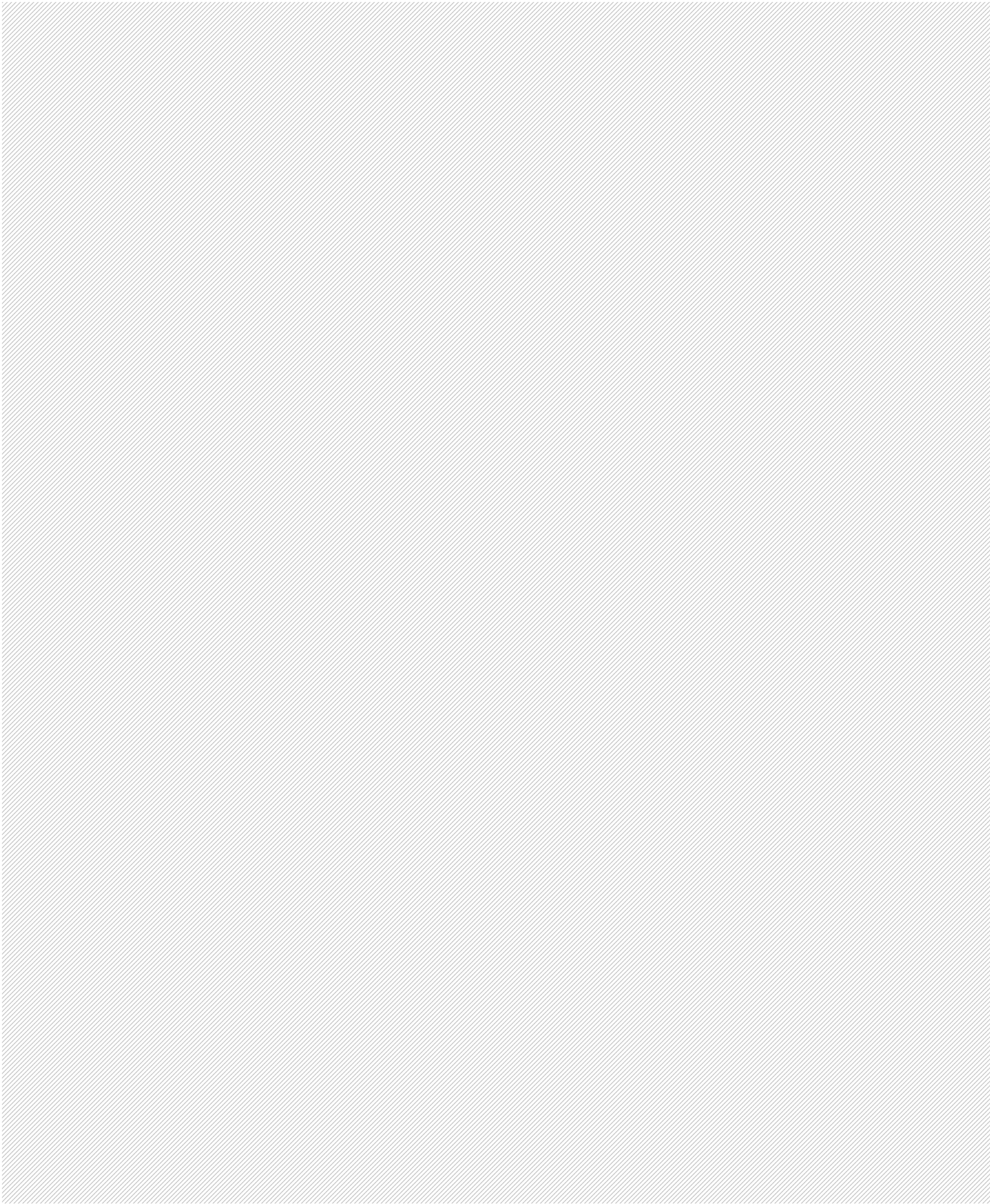
“It will be much easier to control the dust and keep this facility clean,” said Sergeant Weary. “In the tent, the wind would kick up the dust and would cause us problems. Now, we will be able to pro-

vide a much cleaner environment for our patients.”

Another major change is indoor plumbing. Patients will now be able to use the restroom or shower without being assisted to outside facilities.

Sergeant Weary said the new facility will also have a large indoor storage area. In the past, the staff would retrieve supplies from an outdoor storage area. Now, they will have everything they need within the same facility.

“The new facility is absolutely wonderful,” he said. “When the patients come through the doors, they won’t believe they are still in the desert. Small things like this all lead to better patient care.”





DoD releases NSPS draft implementing issuances

By Ed Shannon

311th Human Systems Wing/Public Affairs

Brooks employees and supervisors can review the draft implementing issuances for the human resources portion of the National Security Personnel System, which the Department of Defense released on Nov. 23, according to Charles Shinn, Brooks NSPS Transition Advisor.

The draft issuances provide details for carrying out provisions included in the NSPS regulations and are subject to the continuing collaboration process with representatives of DoD employees. The process will provide the unions with an opportunity to participate in further planning, development and implementation of the human resources systems for NSPS, DoD officials said.

The unions will have the opportunity to submit written comments and discuss their views on these matters. DoD recently provided copies of these draft implementing issuances to the unions for their review in advance of the continuing collaboration process.

Brooks employees and supervisors can access the draft implementing issuances through the Brooks Home Page. An NSPS hotlink is available on the right side of the Brooks Home Page. After employees click on the NSPS link, a new screen will appear where employees can click on the NSPS DoD link. The links to the draft NSPS implementing issuances

are available on the DoD NSPS website.

In other NSPS news, a number of DoD unions sued on Nov. 7 to block portions of NSPS regulations dealing with labor relations, mandatory removal offenses, and appeals. After a series of discussions among DoD, the Office of Personnel Management, Department of Justice, and those labor unions, DoD voluntarily



agreed to delay the implementation of portions of NSPS until Feb. 1, 2006, at the earliest. The agreement requests that the Court set a hearing on the case in early January.

Between now and Feb. 1, DoD will either start or continue training the workforce on NSPS. Brooks NSPS training officials announced in November that performance management classes will take place after the first of the year.

The classes were originally scheduled to take place Nov. 15-18, but were postponed due to slight changes in the NSPS implementation schedule. The classes are designed for supervisors and employees, and the new schedule will be published in January 2006, said Toni Robertson, Brooks NSPS training coordinator.

The performance management classes are important because NSPS is a perfor-

mance-based system and requires supervisors to work with employees in developing performance plans and to explain the link between employee performance objectives and the overall mission of the organization. Performance expectations will be provided to the employee in writing.

Supervisors will be trained on the new system and will be held accountable for giving each employee a fair appraisal. How well employees conduct their performance plans and their effectiveness will be an important consideration in determining their pay increases.

Ms. Robertson said employees and supervisors should continue to pursue the computer-based training classes available now on the Air Force Portal.

Brooks is expected to transition to the new personnel system in April 2006. NSPS is a new, flexible civilian personnel system that will enable the Department of the Air Force to better meet the national security demands of the twenty-first century, Air Force officials said. NSPS includes a new labor relations system, a new appeals process and an enhanced human resources system, covering staffing, workforce shaping, recruitment, compensation, and performance management.

NSPS officials remind employees and supervisors to check out information about the system on the Department of Defense and Air Force websites. Those websites are accessible via the Brooks Home Page. An NSPS hotlink is available on the right side of the Brooks Home Page.

AF officer charged with son's murder

WRIGHT PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — An Air Force officer was charged formally Nov. 21 in the death of his five-week-old son.

Second Lt. David Valois, a program manager in the Human Resources Enterprise Business Systems with the Air Force Research Laboratory, was charged with murder under Article 118 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The next step in the military justice system is an Article 32 hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Based on evidence presented at the hearing, the investigating officer will make a recommendation to the convening authority on whether the case should go to trial. The convening authority is Lt. Gen. John Hudson, commander, Aeronautical Systems Center.

If tried and convicted of the preferred charge, the maximum sentence is confinement in prison for life without parole and dismissal from the Air Force.

As in the civilian legal system, the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. The infant, Andre Valois, was taken from base housing Oct. 2 to Children's Medical Center and died there.

A pre-trial confinement hearing was held Oct. 12. At the hearing, a neutral and detached officer determined there was probable cause for Lieutenant Valois to remain in confinement until his trial.



ERIC STEPHENS
311th Human Systems
Wing director

ACTION LINE

536-2222

The DIRECTOR'S ACTION LINE is your opportunity to make Brooks a better place to live, work and play. If you have a suggestion for improvement, a complaint or a problem that you have not been able to resolve through normal complaint channels or the chain of command, call the **DIRECTOR'S ACTION LINE, 536-2222**. Only items of general interest will be published, so please leave your name and number for a personal response.

The base agencies listed below can be contacted directly:

Brooks City-Base Security.....	536-2851	Military Personnel.....	536-1845
311th Communications Squadron.....	536-6571	Civilian Personnel.....	536-3353
311th Mission Support Group –		Military Pay.....	536-5778
Logistics Division.....	536-3541	Civilian Pay.....	536-8370
Safety.....	536-2111	Inspector General (FWA).....	536-2358
BDA Housing Community Maintenance.....	533-5900	Military Equal Opportunity.....	536-2584
BDA Housing Community Office.....	533-5905	EEO Complaints.....	536-3702
311th Services Division.....	536-2545	Brooks City-Base AF Project Office.....	536-3655
59th Medical Squadron (Clinic).....	536-4715	Brooks Development Authority.....	536-5366

HOG WILD



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alfonso Ramirez Jr.

Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Reid (left) receives a surprise visit from Chief Master Sgt. Reggie Williams, command chief of the 311th Human Systems Wing. The command chief came with notification that Sergeant Reid had been promoted to chief master sergeant.

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

SPONSOR TRAINING

Dec. 13 — 10 - 11 a.m., Bldg. 537

In accordance with AFI 36-3011, sponsor training is mandatory of all first-time sponsors and those who have not sponsored within the past year. However, others are more than welcome to attend. Learn about tools and resources available for sponsors.

PREDEPLOYMENT BRIEFING

Dec. 15 — 1 - 2 p.m., Bldg. 537

Mandatory briefings address issues that pertain to deployed service members and their families. Appointments necessary.

BROOKS ANGEL TREE PROJECT

With the holidays just around the corner, the Brooks Angel Tree project is in need of giving members of the Brooks community. Several Angel Trees will be set up around the base. The trees are decorated with small Christmas cards, with each card labeled with a child's age and gender. Choose a card and fill out the attached label. Return the label with a gift (unwrapped or wrapped) to place under the Angel Tree. Your generosity will brighten up the holiday season for the families from our Brooks City-Base community.

ART AND ESSAY CONTEST

Each year during Military Family Month of November, Armed Services YMCA has its annual art and essay contests, sponsored by GEICO Direct and Lockheed Martin, for children of military families representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Reserve/National Guard, and Coast Guard. First and second place winners from each branch receive a U.S. Savings bond. For more details or for applications, visit www.asymca.org or pick up an application at the FSC. All entries must be postmarked by March 17.

FSC AMENITIES

For those parents who visit our Family Support Center accompanied by children or infants, our FSC has a separate family room equipped with a computer. While mom and/or dad use the computer or internet, the children can enjoy the Mickey Mouse TV with numerous exciting kid videos, a children's recliner and a children's table with chairs, games and books. For the infants, a high chair, baby pen and changing table are available to meet their needs. In addition, an adult rocking chair and recliner is also available for parents to put the little ones to sleep or just to take a break and relax with the kids.

To register for a class, call 536-2444



Combat Dining-In



Participants at the 2005 Combat Dining-In enjoyed an evening of food, fun and festivity. The event was a success, as approximately 100 enlisted personnel met at the Brooks City-Base EMEDS site for the sixth annual Dining-In. The Combat Dining-In is the newest in dining-in traditions. The format is built around the traditional, formal Dining-In social events, but the function has a less formal atmosphere and combat dress requirements. The primary purpose of the Dining-In is to enhance morale and unity. The function enhances 'esprit de corps', lightens the load of day-to-day work and enables members of all grades to create better working relations through an atmosphere of good comradery. The Air Force Dining-In began in the 1930s and is rooted in antiquity, a proud tradition honoring military victories and achievements from pre-Christian Roman legions and second century Viking warlords to King Arthur's knights in the sixth century.

THE MAJOR PLAYERS

Chairperson of the Committee:

Airman 1st Class Aja Bowser
Airman 1st Class David Clay

Mister Vice:

Senior Airman Andrew Harvey

Madam Vice:

Staff Sgt. Melissa Vela

Sergeant at Arms:

Staff Sgt. Tracy Meduna

Advisor to the Airman's Council:

Chief Master Sgt. Eric Harmon

President of the Mess:

Chief Master Sgt. Eric Harmon



ABOVE: Tech. Sgt. Juan Arispe of the 68th IOS prepares for battle.

LEFT: Staff Sgt. Traci Meduna (left) of the 59th Medical Squadron, and Chief Master Sgt. Eric Harmon of USAFSAM, maneuver through the obstacle course in less than record-breaking time.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Anita Schroeder



The Honor Guard pays respect — to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country and to those still missing — at the POW-MIA table ceremony, a traditional ceremony held at major functions, like awards banquets and dining-in events.



Chief Master Sgt. Eric Harmon presents the Airman's Council coin to Staff Sgt. Jesse Noriega, a Marine reservist and San Antonio Police officer. Sergeant Noriega, who fought the war in Iraq, was the guest speaker of the Combat Dining-In.



The cup on the head to signify the cup's emptiness is a time honored tradition.



Chief Master Sgt. Roddy Hartsook (left), 68th Information Operation Squadron, and Airman 1st Class Aja Bowser, president of the Airman's Council, participate in the barbed-wire crawl, part of the event's obstacle course.



AIR FORCE BRIEFS

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Several Bernard P. Randolph scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors who will be enrolling in a college or university for the Fall 2006 semester. Scholarships are also available to part-time and full-time undergraduate students currently enrolled in a college or university, including both two- and four-year institutions.

Applicants must be Department of Defense employees working in San Antonio or their immediate family members. Retired employees living in San Antonio are eligible. The award must be applied to tuition, fees or other expenses accrued to attend a two- or four-year institution. All scholarships must be claimed by Sept. 30, 2006. All unclaimed scholarships will be forfeited.

The Bernard P. Randolph Scholarship was established in 1992. It is named in honor of an African-American commander of the Air Force System Command. It is made possible by the African-American Cultural Association and the Brooks City-Base community.

For an application package or for more information on the scholarship, contact Capt. Allen Blair at 536-7272.

MAJOR CONVICTED FOR COCAINE POSSESSION, USE

An officer at the Air Force Institute of Technology pled guilty to one charge of possession of cocaine and one of use of cocaine during a general court-martial Nov. 14 and 15.

Maj. John R. Foresman was sentenced by a panel of officers to four months confinement, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and a dismissal. Both charges are in violation of Article 112a, Uniform Code of Military Justice. The major was represented by Capt. J. David Voltz and James P. Fleisher. Lt. Col. Vance Spath and Capt. Joanna M. Larson represented the United States by serving as trial counsel for the 88th Air Base Wing legal office.

NATIONAL JOB FAIR

The Non-Commissioned Officers Association will host a National Job Fair Dec. 13 at the Live Oak Civic

Center, 8101 Pat Booker Rd., from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The job fair is open to all job seekers and free of charge. Bring plenty of resumes, wear business attire (military uniform acceptable) and be prepared to meet with national and local company recruiters.

For more information and to see a list of participating companies, visit www.militaryjobworld.com or call 653-6161, ext 271.

AF SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR IA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Air Force is offering qualified officers, who apply no later than Jan. 3, the opportunity to compete for and earn a master's degree in the Information Assurance Scholarship Program. A board will convene Jan. 19 at the Air Force Personnel Center to select officers to attend the IASP.

The Defense Department established the program to increase the number of qualified officers entering the information assurance career field. The DoD saw the need to train officers in information assurance as the department has become increasingly dependent on information technology for war fighting and for the security of its communications infrastructure.

The program varies in length from 18 to 24 months for the Naval Post Graduate School, located in Monterey, Calif., and the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

The Information Resources Management College program, located at Fort McNair, D.C., is one semester and counts as nine to 15 graduate credit hours towards a master's program at partnering institutions. The balance of the program may be completed in six to 18 months depending on the partner school selected.

Participants will incur a three-year active duty service commitment upon completion of the program. Information on eligibility requirements, submitting applications and participating schools can be found at www.defenselink.mil/nii/iasp/DoDMembersMain.htm.

Legal Assistance Hours: If you need a power of attorney, will or other legal assistance, please call the Brooks Legal Office at 536-3301. Legal assistance is available to active duty and retired military personnel and their dependents. Appointments are available Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. and walk-ins are welcome Thursdays from 1:30-2:45 p.m. The legal office offers notary services during duty hours Monday through Friday on a drop-in basis. Those with short notice deployment or other emergency may call or walk-in to the Legal Office any time.

Holiday Open House
Brooks Heritage Foundation Gift Shop
Dec. 8, 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Door prizes and holiday munchies





MEO aims to increase cultural awareness



Photo by Elizabeth Castillo

Staff Sgt. Amanda Sutton (left), non-commissioned officer in charge of the Military Equal Opportunity office, shows one of the many books about diversity to Staff Sgt. Michelle Mitchell of the 311th Human Systems Wing. In addition to books, the MEO office has videos and other resources promoting equal opportunity and cultural awareness. The resources are available to all base personnel.

By Elizabeth Castillo

Discovery writer

In order to inform and unite the Air Force, one office at Brooks is devoted to spreading knowledge of the many different cultures, nationalities and races that make the Air Force so diverse.

The Military Equal Opportunity office is committed to their mission of “ensuring that Air Force equal opportunity and treatment policies are fulfilled.” The MEO office promotes diversity through education and open communication. Aimed at encouraging cultural awareness and knowledge, MEO is making new changes and advancements to increase education and open communication throughout Brooks’ personnel.

“We do a lot of education and human relations courses,” said Staff Sgt. Amanda Sutton, NCIOC of the MEO office. “Every person that steps foot on base sees our faces.”

In addition to Sergeant Sutton, two new members recently joined the MEO team – Master Sgt. Michael McCoy, superintendent, and Capt. Belitza Dominquez, chief. The addition of the two new members has brought a fresh batch of ideas and outlooks on how to fulfill the MEO mission.

In order to promote a more positive outlook towards the MEO office, the MEO team will introduce new programs and events to improve diversity awareness in a fun manner.

“Many people look at MEO as an affirma-

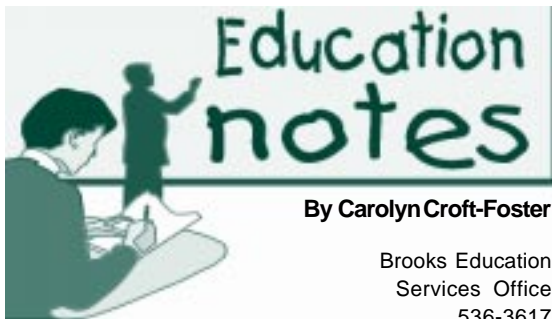
tive action outlook. If MEO is there, then something is wrong,” Sergeant Sutton said. “We are trying to change that, get out more, do more education and get our faces seen and get it to be more of a positive thing.”

The office is planning a quarterly movie with a brown bag lunch, diversity leadership and mentorship courses, and a website devoted to disseminating information that personnel may need. The movies shown will relate to the five protective categories of discrimination: race, color, religion, national origin and sex or gender.

“The main goal is to get people together and discuss these topics because something you may have experienced is not something I have experienced,” Sergeant Sutton said. “Getting a discussion going always helps people have more information and a better understanding.”

The MEO office, located in Bldg. 570-C, has a conference room equipped with books, videos and other resources that are available to base personnel in order to increase the awareness and education of diversity. Base personnel are invited to spend time in the conference room during lunch breaks, or as a neutral zone to discuss any issues or topics that may need addressing with the help of the MEO office.

“One of the goals that we are going for is to try and get people to not look at MEO as a negative thing, and start realizing that MEO is an office about diversity, and getting to know new and different things about co-workers and individuals,” Sergeant Sutton said.



By Carolyn Croft-Foster

Brooks Education
Services Office
536-3617

Officer Education Levels

All officers need to verify their education level in the vMPF. If the education level that is reflected is incorrectly listed, please contact the AFIT Academic Coding Section at the afit.coding@afit.edu or 937-255-6565 ext. 4324.

If the education level is missing, an official transcript, sent directly from the school granting the degree to AFIT is required. The address at AFIT is AFIT-SCI, 2950 Hobson Way, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433. Education Services does not have the ability to update an officer's records at the local level. Please allow ample time for this update to occur at AFIT and plan accordingly.

Montgomery GI Bill participants can increase benefits

Active-duty personnel currently enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill have the opportunity to increase Chapter 30 GI Bill benefits by \$5,400 (from \$23,400 to \$28,800) for a maximum contribution of \$600. This payment increases the full-time monthly rate \$1 for every \$4 contributed. The minimum payment is \$20 per month. Contributions can be started and stopped at any time while the participant is on active duty. This is not a pay reduction; therefore, there is not a tax savings. This benefit is only open to personnel who first entered active duty on or after July 1, 1985 and elected to participate in the Montgomery GI Bill. This feature is not open to Vietnam-Era or VEAP Convertees.

Discover Program online

The Discover Program is a career exploration program for individuals searching for a new career. This program can be used by military, civilians and family members. For more information or to schedule an appointment to review the website and get started, call 536-3617.

Upper Iowa University

Upper Iowa allows students to complete degrees through its Military Campus Resident Centers, on-line, or through external degree programs. In January, Upper Iowa University will begin offering courses that also apply toward Community College of the Air Force, thereby allowing students to complete work toward a bachelor's degree at the same time they meet requirements for CCAF. For more information, call 536-3617 to schedule an appointment with Maggi Monroe, the San Antonio Center representative. Pamphlets are available in the Education Office or visit the Upper Iowa website at www.uiu.edu or call 536-3617.

Cyber Security programs

Students interested in IT careers can now specialize in cyber security through programs offered at Our Lady of the Lake University. In addition to traditional technology courses, students will take courses geared towards computer and network security management.

Certified by the National Security Agency, OLLU's undergraduate degree in Computer Information Systems and Security Education and graduate degree in E-Business Information Systems with a concentration in Information Assurance and Security also prepares students to take national certification exams. Eighty-five percent of OLLU graduates successfully pass.

An OLLU representative is in the Brooks Education Office from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. every Tuesday to answer questions about the programs or visit www.ollusa.edu.

Texas State University

Texas State University offers a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree. The BAAS degree provides an excellent opportunity for individuals to capitalize on prior work and training experiences. Students pursuing this degree may transfer semester hours previously earned, individualize the degree plan with major emphasis in an occupational field of choice, and earn semester hour credit for work and life experience and training conducted by business, industry, and military. Night classes are available in the San Antonio and San Marcos area. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 536-3618.

Air Force Virtual Education Center

Service members can view information about Air Force education centers, individual education record, DANTES test scores, and tuition assistance requests from the on-line Virtual Education Center. Tuition assistance is requested through this website as well. CCAF students can order CCAF transcripts from the website and view a web progress report. There are also practice tests available for CLEP exams and information about commissioning. To access the AFVEC go to <https://my.af.mil/afvecprod>. For more information, call 536-3617.

Spouses to Teachers Program

The Department of Defense tasked DANTES to develop and manage a new pilot program to help spouses begin careers as teachers. The Spouses to Teachers Program has been launched in six states with a large military population and a need for public school teachers.

These states are California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas and Virginia. Based on interest and activity, additional states may be added in the future. All eligible spouses who wish to become teachers may receive assistance from the Spouses to Teachers Program. This includes spouses who have already earned a baccalaureate degree or higher, as well as spouses who are at the undergraduate level. Degreed spouses will be counseled on their options for achieving certification and information on potential funding sources and employment opportunities.

Non-degree holders will receive help in identifying degree completion programs, as well as information about possible financial assistance, both state and federal, and the potential for finding employment as teacher's aides or other positions in public schools. To take advantage of this program in Texas, spouses may contact the Texas pilot office toll free at 1-800-815-5484.





Former Air Force flying cadet dishes ‘the dirt’ on Brooks Field

By Rudy Purificato
311th Human Systems Wing

To Brooks Field flying cadet Roy Pratt, the old saying “the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence” rang true after he arrived here on June 1, 1941.

“It started off (as) grass, but we flew off a dirt field. Only the officers were allowed to fly off the grass field for cross country flights,” recalls the 85-year-old Mr. Pratt about his advanced flying training in BC-1 monoplanes.

Speaking by phone from his Conneaut, Ohio home, Mr. Pratt admits having not returned to Brooks since earning his wings. He discussed his Army Air Corps career after his daughter Robin Whitely made a surprise visit to Hangar 9.

Mrs. Whitely, whose husband was attending a recent conference in San Antonio, said she wanted to visit the base where her father learned to fly. Mr. Pratt credits his Brooks Field training for helping prepare him for his World War II assignment as a B-26 Marauder pilot.

“I had two years of college before I enlisted on Nov. 22, 1940,” he said about his pre-Pearl Harbor Army service that evolved into flying medium range bombers.

“There were no pilots in my family,” he says, explaining that his interest in flying went beyond the airplane models he had built as a boy. When World War II began in 1939, the pragmatic 19-year-old kid from East Springfield, Pa., knew that

sooner than later America would be drawn into the war. Wanting to control his own destiny, he signed up for flight training, confessing, “I didn’t want to end up in the infantry.”

After completing basic flying instruction at Randolph Field, he was sent to Brooks where he says he felt like he had traveled back in time. “It (Brooks) looked like World War I. All the hangars and barracks were wood,” he said.

He spent two and half months here, eventually transitioning to the then new single engine AT-6. “Every day we had ground school that included training in the Link trainer. We also flew cross country (solo) to Navasota and Brownsville,” Mr. Pratt said. He noted that the Brooks flying school was composed of three flight sections.

After graduating in August 1941, the newly minted second lieutenant Pratt transferred to the 38th Bomb Group in Jackson, Miss., where he initially learned to pilot the B-18.

“We were the second group to get the (new) B-26,” he said, characterizing it as a ‘hot’ airplane. The twin engine Marauder, flown by a crew of six, had a range of between 300-350 miles.



Courtesy photo

An A-26 (RB-26) marauder undergoes a pre-flight check at Brooks Field in 1946. Part of the 363rd Reconnaissance Group’s 162nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, this bomber is similar to the one former Brooks Field flying cadet Roy Pratt flew during World War II.

“Most pilots (then) learned to fly in single engine planes,” Mr. Pratt said, noting that he had no trouble transitioning to the more powerful aircraft. After the war, the 162nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron flew an upgraded version of the Marauder from Brooks Field.

Mr. Pratt flew the B-26 during the D-Day invasion as part of the 9th Air Force that supported assault troops at Utah Beach in Normandy, France. “I flew 52 combat missions. I came home in July 1944,” he said.

The former 453rd Bomb Squadron commander separated from the Air Force in 1946, the same year the 363rd Reconnaissance Group arrived here with Marauders for a five month tour.

The former lieutenant colonel retired in 1991 from the dry cleaning business. It was an avocation that could have taken off earlier, had he decided to quit flying at Brooks in favor of profiting from the removal of flying cadet uniform dirt and grass stains.



Things to do around Brooks
Janice McMahon, 536-5475

WINTER CAMP

This year's Winter Camp will be Dec. 19 through Jan. 3 from 6:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. Youth ages five through 12 are eligible to participate in cooking activities, field trips, outdoor time, gift wrapping lessons plus many other activities. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided for camp attendees. Fees are determined by total household income. Camp will be closed Dec. 26 and Jan. 2.

SANTA'S PARTY AND HOLIDAY CAROLING

Santa's Party and Holiday Caroling will start at the Youth Programs Center Dec. 13 at 5 p.m. Participants will meet at the youth center and visit with Santa.

Share hot chocolate and cookies with your neighbors. At 6 p.m. everyone will raise their voices and go caroling through base housing. Please bring your flashlight as it will be dark. Everyone is then invited to go caroling through base housing with the center staff. Join in and help

entertain base housing residents with the sounds of holiday songs.

ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING

The Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will be Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. outside the Hangar 9 museum. The audience will sing holiday carols following the tree lighting ceremony. Bring the children, both young and young at heart, to visit with Santa and his helpers. They will arrive as everyone sings "Here Comes Santa." Refreshments will be served following the ceremony.

LET'S WRAP IT UP

Do you have trouble gift wrapping or can't find the time to wrap your Christmas presents? Santa Claus will send his helpers to make your holiday gift wrapping painless. Let's Wrap It Up will be Dec. 5-23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Youth Programs Center. There is no charge, but donations will be accepted. All you need to do is bring your gifts and let us do the wrapping for you. We will even provide the paper and ribbon! How much easier can it get?

(If you have a box for your gift, please bring it with the item to be wrapped. This will help the workers with wrapping your gifts. All donations will go towards the Youth and Teen Center programs.)

FIT FACTOR: YOUTH FITNESS PROGRAM

Fit Factor is a fitness program for youth, ages 9-18 years. The theme

is "Get Up, Get Out, Get Fit." Visit the Youth Center to enroll your children. Collect a prize just for committing to "Get Up, Get Out, Get Fit." Once a child commits to the program he or she can go online, choose activities and log points. Youth who complete five exciting levels earn great items. Participate for a chance to learn new skills, get fit and win prizes.

YOUTH BASKETBALL REGISTRATION

Registration for youth basketball is underway and will continue until the program is filled. Youth ages 5-18 years may register. The fee is \$35 for Youth Programs Center members and \$52 for non-members.

SANTA CLAUS SUIT RENTAL

Are you having a party and the most important person is missing? The Youth Programs Center is offering a one-day Santa Claus suit rental for \$15. The suit comes with wig, beard, jacket, pants, hat, belt, shoe coverings and a bag for gifts. Have Santa visit your home or make an appearance at the office party. Reserve your suit early to ensure that jolly old St. Nick makes an appearance at your function.

COOK YOUR OWN STEAK

Patrons can now grill their own steaks. Bring the family or friends to the Boar's Head Pub every Monday evening from 4-7 p.m. and cook your steak just the way you like it. For \$7.50, you will receive a New

York strip steak, potato salad, baked beans, rolls and butter.

BASE LIBRARY

The holidays are fast approaching and the library has several ideas for making this holiday season more memorable.

Cooking

Numerous cookbooks are available, where one can find easy recipes for traditional holiday meals and desserts. Holiday issues of magazines provide a large array of holiday recipes.

Entertainment

We have ideas for games the little ones will enjoy playing. And don't forget to check out books on the holiday theme. Older children can read to the younger ones.

Decorations

Books and magazines are loaded with ideas on how to decorate your holiday table. Making your own decorations can save a bundle of money. Get the children involved and make decorating a family affair.

Cultural Enrichment

December is filled with a variety of cultural and religious celebrations. Broaden your knowledge by reading about some of these special events. For example, learn about Kwanzaa, a harvest festival celebrated Dec 26 to Jan. 1 in some African-American communities, and Hanukkah, an eight-day Jewish fes-

tival commemorating the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem.

FAMILY CAMP

If your home is filled to capacity with out-of-town holiday visitors, consider the Family Camp. The camp is a very secluded and quiet place where travelers like to stay for a few days, weeks or even months. The camp is located on the southwestern corner of the base.

Accommodations also include the use of a bath house and restrooms located in Bldg. 1194. Full camper hookups are \$10 per day and include sewer, water and electricity. Partial camper hookups are \$8 per day. There is also a "catch and release" fishing pond for anglers.

GET IN SHAPE

Get a jump start on your New Year's fitness resolution. Stop by the fitness center to begin a new workout or join any of the free classes offered by the staff. On-going instructional classes:

- *Aerobics*: Mon, Wed: 5 p.m.; Fri: 11:30 a.m.
- *Yoga*: Mon, Wed, Fri: 5 p.m.
- *Pilates*: Mon, Wed, Thurs: 5 p.m.
- *Kickboxing*: Mon: 11:30 a.m.; Fri: 5 p.m.
- *Power Cycling*: Tues, Thurs: 11:30 a.m., 5 p.m.
- *Circuit Training*: Tues, Thurs: 6:15 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

**Visit the Discovery online at
www.brooks.af.mil/HSW/PA/discovery**

A LOOK at BROOKS

What is your
Christmas
shopping ritual?



Nita White
311th MSG

I don't go to the stores. I stay at home and shop online.



Eileen King
311th HSW

I shop well in advance earlier during the year to take advantage of all the good sales and bargains.



Benny Leal
311th HSW

I don't like shopping and I think it is a very high pressure chore. I do it all at one time, as fast as I can and at the last minute.



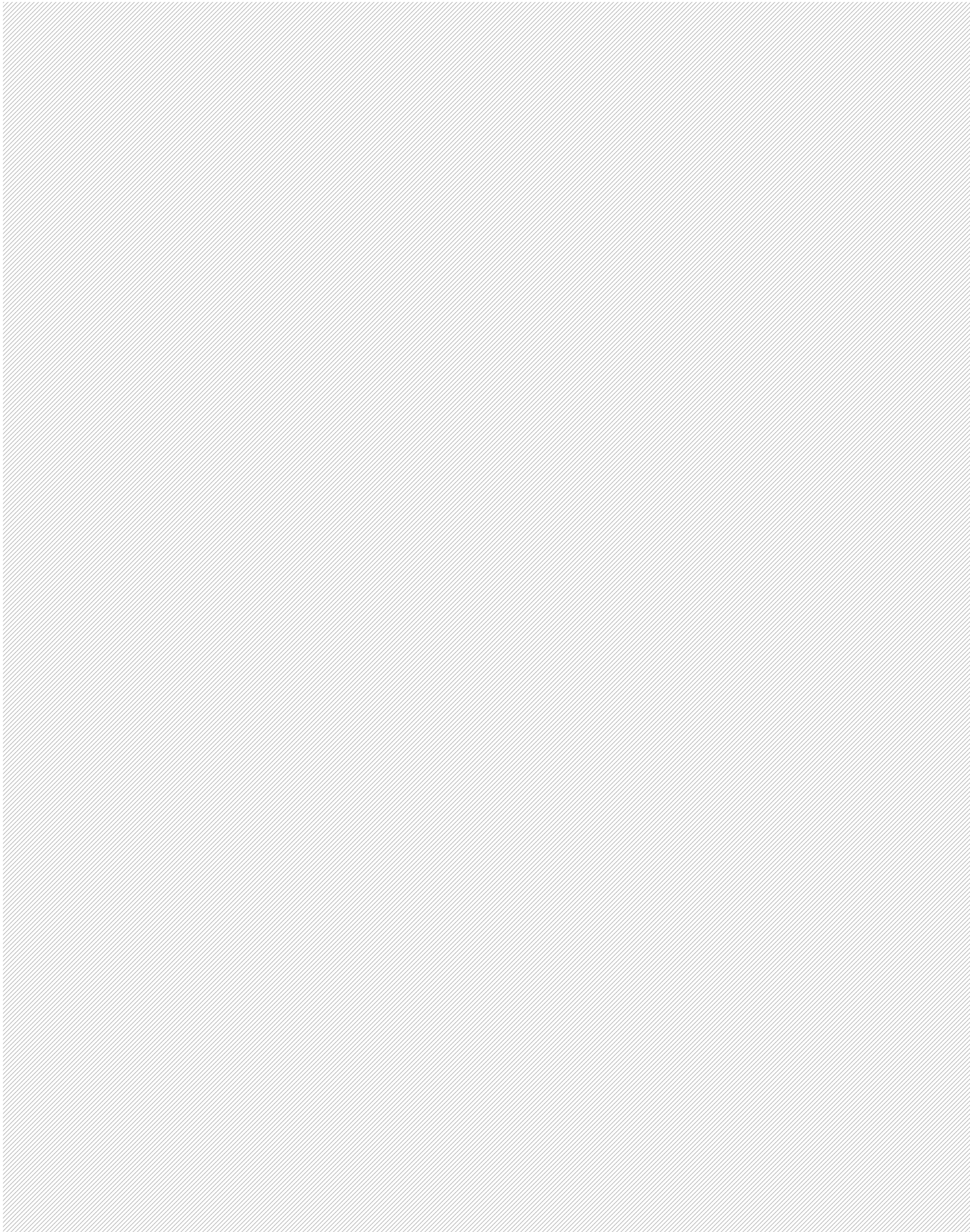
Staff Sgt. Dale Kirner
USAFSAM

If I'm at home, my wife and I do the shopping together and we start around November. Since I'm here, my wife is doing the shopping for both of us.



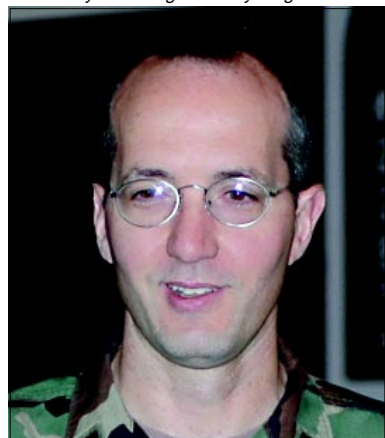
Staff Sgt. Daniel Hughes
USAFSAM

I wait until the last minute, about a week or two before Christmas, and then do all of my shopping online.





Photos by Staff. Sgt. Brandy Bogart



HUBBS



FULL NAME:

Chaplain (Capt.) John David Hubbs

DUTY TITLE, ORGANIZATION:

Chaplain, 311th Human Systems Wing,
Base Chapel

**IN SIMPLE TERMS,
WHAT DO YOU DO?:**

One of two chaplains serving Brooks
City Base

BIRTHDAY:

April 9

HOMETOWN:

East Peoria, Ill.

FAMILY STATUS:

Wife, Melody and three
teenagers, Elizabeth, David
and Joseph

PERSONAL MOTTO:

"Holiness starts with honesty – be
truthful about who you are now or you'll
never become what God is calling you
to be."

INSPIRATIONS:

Several humble, devoted Christians
whose names you wouldn't recognize,
but whose lives truly reflected God's
love toward me.

HOBBIES:

Singing (especially when doing my
Elvis impersonation), managing my
fantasy sports teams, having
meaningful conversations over a cup of
really good coffee

PET PEEVE:

Changes that are mandated for no
apparent reason other than to maintain
an illusion of progress

**I JOINED THE MILITARY
BECAUSE:**

I saw it as a chance to make a
difference in the lives of young adults

FIVE-YEAR GOAL:

Get promoted so that I can keep
ministering as a chaplain, score a 100
on the PFT (missed it by half an inch
last time), and begin a Doctor of
Ministry program

ULTIMATE GOAL:

Hear the Lord say, "Well done good
and faithful servant." Before that,
perhaps serve 15 more years as an Air
Force chaplain, and then convince the
St. Louis Cardinals to hire me as their
team chaplain.

Bringing 'The King' to Brooks

By Kendahl Johnson

Discovery editor

For those looking for an Elvis impersonator who can also pray over the event, Brooks City-Base knows just the man.

Chaplain (Capt.) John Hubbs joined the Brooks team at the Base Chapel in July. He has since been not only spreading the good Word here, but also spreading this word – that he is available to impersonate Elvis at your next function.

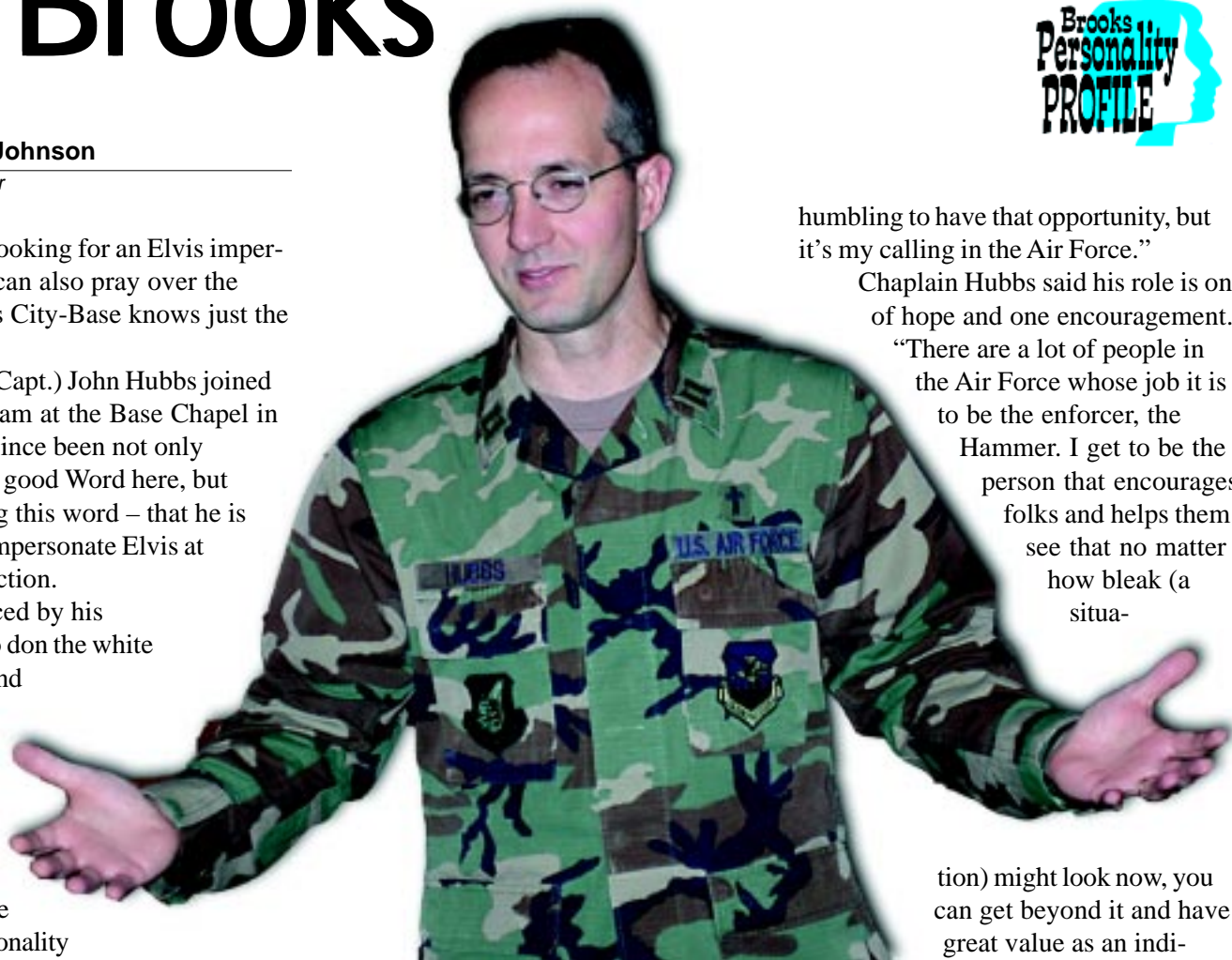
As evidenced by his willingness to don the white bellbottoms and fake sideburns and impersonate The King's gyrations, Chaplain Hubbs has the outgoing personality one might expect from someone called to be a beacon of light and hope in the lives of others. In addition to his fun-loving nature, his loving, caring heart and dedication have also helped him be successful in serving God and his country as a religious leader. Yet his reason for joining the military as a chaplain extends beyond having traits and attributes useful for that profession. "I have the Navy to thank for becoming an Air Force chaplain," Chaplain Hubbs said.

Although the Navy played its role, the path towards military chaplaincy began much earlier in life for Chaplain Hubbs. He grew up in East Peoria, Ill., in a faith-filled home. Following high school graduation, he went to Greenville College, a four-year Christian liberal arts college in southern Illinois. From Greenville, he went to Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky. Following graduation in 1990, he moved back to Illinois to work in the ministry.

He was pastor of a small church with a mostly elderly congregation. He said he loved the members of his church and they loved him, but he felt it was time to do something different. "I was at a point in my ministry where I was looking for a new challenge," Chaplain Hubbs said.

He was intrigued by a recruiting letter he had received from the Navy, and decided to meet with a Navy chaplain and recruiter. "I liked everything they said, but they were a little elusive when I asked how long I'd be at sea," Chaplain Hubbs said, adding that he already had a wife and three children and being at sea wouldn't be the best thing for his young family. Instead, a friend who was a former enlisted Air Force member encouraged him to apply to be an Air Force chaplain.

He said the application process was a "long, painful process" and that he



humbling to have that opportunity, but it's my calling in the Air Force."

Chaplain Hubbs said his role is one of hope and one encouragement.

"There are a lot of people in the Air Force whose job it is to be the enforcer, the Hammer. I get to be the person that encourages folks and helps them see that no matter how bleak (a situa-

tion) might look now, you can get beyond it and have great value as an individual."

saw "more paperwork than I hope to ever see again in my life," but eventually he was accepted in the Air Force in 1998.

Although his Air Force career is still young – Brooks City-Base is the chaplain's fourth assignment – he has had opportunities to travel the world. His first assignment was Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. It was from Goodfellow that he was deployed to Aviano Air Base, Italy, for what he calls one of the highlights of his Air Force career. From there, he was assigned to McConnell AFB, Kansas, where he deployed to the desert. Next, he received a one-year remote assignment in Korea.

The Navy may have played its part in recruiting Chaplain Hubbs to a life of military chaplaincy, but he does not forget the role God played in leading him down that path.

"Little things happened along the way that if you aren't a person of faith, you chalk up to coincidence," he said. "But if you are a person of faith and have been praying about things you do believe that God is calling you in a particular direction."

And despite the paperwork in getting here, he is glad he made the transition from pastor to Air Force chaplain, a job he finds rewarding.

"I love the chance to make a difference in young people's lives at a stage where their direction is still being charted," Chaplain Hubbs said. "You have only so much life-changing influence over someone who is 80 years old; their course has pretty much been settled by that point. When you have a chance to minister to someone (young), and they indicate your relationship with them made a difference in what direction their life took, is a huge thing. It's

He added that working in the ministry has increased his appreciation for his own upbringing. "Since becoming a chaplain, the one thing I have learned is to be more thankful for the loving, faith-filled home I grew up in," he said. "I can't tell you the number of times I have had a broken heart listening to people tell their stories. I realize that everyone didn't have two parents that loved them like I had."

Being more conscious of how blessed he was growing up, he said he wants to pass along that same gift to his three teenaged children. Helping him have a loving, faith-filled home is his wife, who also has a religious background. She is the graduate of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Ill. The pair met at a Youth for Christ singing group as teenagers. "Christ was central to our relationship from the day we first met," Chaplain Hubbs said.

Although working for the Air Force has been mostly rewarding, it isn't without a few frustrations. Being the government, sharing the Gospel can sometimes be tricky. "I'm still called as a minister to share the Gospel. I just have to be careful about how and when I go about doing it. But if it's ever forbidden that I share my faith, I'd stop being a chaplain."

He said people should be less afraid to share their faith, but to learn how to do it in a respectful way. "I don't think religious sensitivity means everybody keeps every religious opinion to themselves. People just need to learn how to respectfully share their faith and be willing to listen to others share theirs."

Chaplain Hubbs will continue to share the Gospel. He'll continue to be a blessing to others. And he'll continue to entertain the troops with his Elvis impersonations.



AN AEROSPACE MEDICINE SERIES

AF hyperbaric medicine innovations
advance worldwide therapy

ON THE CUTTING EDGE

USAFSAM's oxygen therapy a 'breath of fresh air'

(Editor's note: This is the final article in a 12-part comprehensive series that focuses on the enormous impact that Air Force vision and ingenuity has had in the development of lifesaving scientific medical advances and innovations whose legacy continues to benefit America's military and civilian community.)

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

For cancer survivor Juan Gonzales, a retired Army sergeant major, aerospace medical research did not cure him, but contributed to his recovery from radiation therapy-induced bone deterioration.

Praising the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine's hyperbaric treatment facility at Brooks City-Base, he said, "They have really done some amazing things here for me and other patients with necrosis, osteomyelitis and diabetes."

The worldwide evolution of hyperbaric oxygen therapy, used in treating a variety of life-threatening medical disorders, owes its advanced development to Air Force high altitude research. "The Air Force was interested in hyperbaric oxygen therapy as an operational issue involving decompression sickness in pilots," said Dr. Paul Sheffield, former USAFSAM hyperbaric research scientist who today is president of International ATMO, Inc. at the Nix Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine Center in San Antonio.

Dr. Sheffield said the Air Force impetus for developing oxygen therapies was operationally inspired. From World War II to 1959, decompression sickness at altitude had claimed the lives of 18 aviators and impaired the health of 743 others.

Air Force hyperbaric medicine, an aerospace medicine subspecialty, however, did not exist prior to the advent of the jet age. Its development is linked to centuries-old research on caisson disease, also known as "the bends." In 1878 French physiologist Dr. Paul Bert experimented with oxygen to treat decompression sickness caused by the release of dissolved nitrogen in blood. The focus of his research were balloonists, mountain climbers, miners and deep sea divers who suffered from the condition's debilitating pain.

Altitude-induced decompression sickness was rare when Dr. Orville Cunningham first used a hyperbaric chamber to treat victims of the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic. While aviation medicine was in its infancy, civilian hyperbaric medicine flourished from 1928-1937 as physicians used oxygen to treat a variety of ailments.

The American medical community had lost interest in its therapeutic potential by the time the Air Force launched hyper-



U.S. Air Force photo

U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine personnel attend to patients in the main hyperbaric chamber. Oxygen therapy is used to treat patients suffering from a variety of ailments.

baric medicine's revival in 1960 at Langley Air Force Base, Va. The first successful hyperbaric treatment of a pilot suffering from decompression sickness there led to the creation of the Air Force Hyperbaric Center at Brooks AFB.

In 1963, the same year Duke University inaugurated hypo-hyperbaric research, USAFSAM's Dr. William Fife man-rated the first Air Force hyperbaric chamber. "Shortly following our first man-rated dive, we treated our first medical patient – a lady suffering from gas gangrene caused by an infectious wound," recalls Dr. Fife in a 1981 Discovery story. He said, "This patient was in a comatose state when we started our first treatment. After one dive she was able to leave the chamber awake and reading a magazine."

At the time, the only American civilian decompression chambers available for emergency hyperbaric treatment were located at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, Mass., the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and at the Panama Canal Company's Salvage Depot & Diving School in the Canal Zone.

What had begun as an Air Force program designed to treat aviators victimized by decompression sickness, blossomed by the 1970s into a clinical research juggernaut that would have a worldwide impact on patients who otherwise could no longer be helped by surgery or antibiotics. Sub-

sequent Air Force innovations spawned advances in the treatment of non-healing wounds, carbon monoxide poisoning, air and gas embolisms, crush injuries, bone infections, anemia, radiation-induced tissue necrosis, compromised skin grafts, thermal burns and destructive soft tissue infections.

None of this would have been possible if Dr. Jefferson Davis had not convinced Air Force Surgeon General Robert Patterson in 1973 to approve a proposal for non-healing wound research conducted jointly by USAFSAM and Lackland AFB's Wilford Hall Medical Center.

"Davis came up with the idea to prevent oxygen toxicity by modifying the Navy dive tables. His idea for 20 minute intervals with five minute breaks is the standard today for wound healing oxygen therapy," said Dr. Andrew Pilmanis, retired Air Force Research Laboratory physiologist. Considered the "Father of Air Force Hyperbaric Medicine," Dr. Davis developed several innovative hyperbaric therapies and devices. Among them are abdomen wound molds for topical oxygen treatment, leg and arm bags

and modified bassinets for infant treatment.

His colleagues, Drs. Sheffield and Tom Workman, developed non-invasive transcutaneous oxygen tension measurement techniques that today help doctors determine optimal times for surgical amputations in patients whose wounds don't heal. At Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, Computerized Anthropometric Research & Design Laboratory scientists adapted the Cyberwave 3-D Color Digitizer for hyperbaric wound healing analysis.

One of hyperbaric medicine's greatest breakthroughs, however, was made by Air Force nurse Capt. Michaela Shafer. While assigned to the Armstrong Laboratory, she discovered that hypoglycemia, not oxygen toxicity, caused seizures in diabetic patients receiving hyperbaric therapy.

Today, Air Force hyperbaric medical research is playing a greater role in helping warfighters survive. Dr. Larry Krock, USAFSAM chief scientist who co-authored "Into the Theater of Operations: Hyperbaric Oxygen on the Move," observes, "Research during the past five to eight years indicates hyperbaric oxygen can have an influential role in many acute traumatic injury conditions sustained on the battlefield."

Dr. Krock explained that it could be potentially useful in helping mitigate adverse health effects associated with directed energy and biological weapons. The global bioterrorism threat has led to potentially groundbreaking Air Force hyperbaric medicine genetic research.

"We want (to develop) a real understanding of high pressure oxygen's impact on the body at the cellular and genetic level," says USAFSAM research scientist Dr. John Kalns with the Clinical Investigation Branch in Hyperbarics.



Photo by Rudy Purificato

Tech. Sgt. Richard Welch checks on 97-year-old Linda Casson after the Army widow received treatment in the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine's main hyperbaric chamber in 1997. Mrs. Casson became the oldest person ever treated in an Air Force hyperbaric facility.





Evaluation tests mettle of future combat rescue officers

By Capt. Gary Arasin
347th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Their faces grimaced with strain, and a mixture of sweat and pool water dripped from them onto the ground as the eight men pounded out pushups.

Even with the sun high overhead, the chill in the late-October air reminded them winter was coming to south Georgia.

The Airmen — whittled down from a field of 20 — were testing their mettle to see if they had what it takes to some day wear the maroon beret of a combat rescue officer.

“We are looking for men who are not only physically capable of leading, but are intelligent, articulate and capable of thinking on their feet,” said Maj. Scott Shepard, the CRO functional manager.

Each year, the Air Force conducts a two-phase combat rescue officer selection board in the fall and spring. Phase I is the application phase, designed to test an applicant’s attention to detail as well as his physical capabilities, the major said.

The CRO cadre evaluates each applicant’s physical fitness against the CRO/pararescue annual physical evaluation. That includes calisthenics, 3-mile run,



Photo by Staff Sgt. Manuel Martinez

Ten combat rescue officer candidates test their endurance during a series of events including a six-mile formation run and a four-mile minimum road march with 40-pound rucksacks. These events ensure each candidate meets the stringent requirements of a CRO’s duties.

25-meter underwater swim and 1,500-meter surface swim.

Candidates should score the maximum — or very close to it — to be competitive Major Shepard said.

The team even evaluates the written applications for attention to detail, he said.

“If the candidate can’t follow basic instructions on a paper application, how can we put people’s lives in his hands?” Major Sheppard said.

Only the top 20 candidates — 15 active duty and five reserve or Guard members — pass the

application board. They get an invitation to Moody for Phase II testing. This is a five-day, in-person evaluation, Major Shepard said.

Those chosen receive the other candidates’ contact information and reporting instructions. Phase II actually begins the moment candidates receive their information, he said.

“The team concept is a core concept to all elite forces,” the major said. “Candidates should take the time between notification and the start of Phase II to get to know each other — to

build the team basis essential to success in our training.”

Phase II is a gut check, Major Shepard said. “Candidates can come to Phase II interested in becoming a CRO, but it won’t get them through the week.

“This process is about two things,” the major said. “Do the candidates know what they want to be, and how bad do they want to do it?”

The preparation candidates receive in Phase II is especially important for officer candidates because “washing out” of training is a career-ender, he said.

“Officers don’t get the option of retuning to a former career field or cross training,” the major said. “If they wash out of the pipeline, they are force shaped out of the Air Force.”

As soon as candidates hit Moody, the Phase II cadre starts them through the gauntlet. It starts with repeating the physical training test, this time evaluated to CRO standards.

If they fail, they go home.

The cadre ensures candidates understand the mental piece is just as critical as physical prowess. Candidates go through a psychological evaluation — a written test and an interview — with a survival, evasion, resistance and escape psychologist.

“The interview validates the written test to make sure the candidates have the right mental state of mind for our business,” Major Shepard said.

A lot of adjectives describe what is expected of combat rescue officers — with smart, articulate and compassionate at the top of the list — said Chief Master Sgt. Ryan Beckman, the pararescue career field manager.

“These guys are the leaders of our specialty,” the chief said. “They have to be able to articulate the capabilities and needs of the rescue community.



Fitness center ‘comes clean’ on shower idea

By Rudy Purificato
311th Human Systems Wing

Unlike baseball pitchers who go to the showers when they’re washed up after a bad outing, the Brooks fitness center is relying on the latter to fulfill needs from customers who are awash with useful ideas.

On Monday, 311th Human Systems Wing director Eric Stephens officially opened the fitness center’s new showers for women during a ribbon cutting ceremony. They were installed last month as part of a \$27,000 quality of life project funded by Air Force Materiel Command.

“We conducted a (customer) survey and found that people wanted two more showers rather than have a sauna,” said Brooks fitness center director Roy Conatzer. The four existing showers were inadequate to fulfill the demand, Mr. Conatzer explained, noting the sauna was removed to make room for the new showers.

“Although this project may seem small, it is very impor-

tant to our goal of ensuring our blue suiters are ‘fit to fight.’ In the past, before physical fitness was emphasized as much, four showers were enough,” said John Robinette, Services director.

Mr. Robinette said the additional showers will help reduce customer’s waiting time.

In 2002, the final phase of a massive fitness center renovation was completed. That project included an overhaul of both the men’s and women’s locker rooms and showers.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brandy Bogart

Brooks leaders take part in a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new women’s showers at the base fitness center. From left: Mr. Eric Stephens, director of the 311th Human Systems Wing, John Robinette, Services director, Mel Mel Waldgeir, deputy director of the 311th Mission Support Group, and Col. Georgette Hassler, commander of the 311th MSG.

Ambassadors in blue

by Staff Sgt. Don Branum
50th Space Wing Public Affairs

Airman 1st Class Michael Zdenek is an ambassador.

His job is not as high-profile as national ambassadors or United Nations representatives, but to the people he meets at wedding parties, retirement ceremonies and funerals, his job as a member of the High Frontier Honor Guard is just as important.

Three weeks each month, Airman Zdenek works in the 50th Civil Engineer Squadron. The fourth week belongs to the honor guard. It may involve trips ranging from Boulder, Colo., to Pueblo, Colo., to the other side of the Kansas state line.

Airman Zdenek, the son of a retired Navy officer, said he has always been interested in drill and ceremony. He performed in drill competitions as a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps student and joined the honor guard soon after his arrival here.

“I had always wanted to do it and had heard about it before,” he said. “A couple of NCOs in my squadron recommended I look into joining the honor guard.”

That was eight months ago. Since then, Airman Zdenek has performed about 40 details for the High Frontier Honor Guard, including military wedding ceremonies, color guards and funerals. Most of his details have taken place during his on-call weeks, but he has also volunteered for details outside his duty week.

“We don’t like turning down (color guard details),” he said. “The honor guard asks for volunteers from the other weeks. We help one another out.”

The honor guard has a congressional mandate to perform funeral services for Air Force veterans and retirees, which gives funerals pre-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Don Branum

Airman 1st Class Michzel Zdenek prepares to hand a folded American flag to 1st Lt. Bruce Wang as part of a recent funeral detail.

cedence over any other ceremony that requests honor guard services.

At a funeral service held Veterans Day at a local cemetery, the honor guard left a lasting impression. “From the looks of the people who are out here today and the way (the honor guard) wear the uniform, I can tell they’re proud to wear it,” said Chaplain Walter Bryant a member of the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26 . “It was a joy having you guys here.”

Airman Zdenek said he plans to continue his honor guard service after his year-long tour is up. As one of Schriever’s ambassadors in blue, he will continue to represent the Air Force to communities throughout Colorado.



Brooks outdoor recreation helps create adventure

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Subscribing to the old advertising slogan “It’s not a job, it’s an adventure,” outdoor recreation’s new manager Larry Flores has learned more than a thing or two about what Services has to offer the Brooks community in terms of leisure fun.

From planning the increasingly popular Port Aransas casino trips



Marine Corps Reserve Gunner Sgt. Oscar Gutierrez has spent the past eight years enjoying the fishing at the FamCamp pond.

to organizing deep sea fishing excursions in the Gulf of Mexico, Mr. Flores has been center stage in supporting customers’ leisure time needs.

Closer to home, even the seemingly tranquil pond near the FamCamp has had its share of fish stories involving six-pounders that are believed to have gotten away. “We have a catch and release policy here,” says Mr. Flores about fishing in the waterway which is officially designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as a wetland. Besides catfish, bass and perch that inhabit its waters, the pond is an oasis for migratory birds.

“Some visitors dump (live) fish here,” Mr. Flores said while greeting an angler who is a Marine Corps reservist just back from Iraq.

“I’ve been coming here for about eight years,” said Gunner Sgt. Oscar Gutierrez, a native southsider who is assigned to the 4th Marine Reconnaissance Battalion stationed at Fort Sam Houston.

The 18-year Marine Corps veteran and Harlandale High School graduate said he found out about Brooks’ fishing hole when

he began running on base years ago.

“I saw some people fishing here. I have brought my kids out here. It’s fun. Sometimes you don’t catch anything, but it’s nice and quiet. The people are friendly, too,” Sergeant Gutierrez said.

FamCampers, some of who are permanent residents, help maintain the tranquility that characterizes the nearby wildlife habitat that is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Robert and Tina Kowallec are the FamCamp hosts who make sure that campers enjoy their stay. They collect fees for partial and full hookups there. “It’s very peaceful. We’ve been living here since 1999,” Mrs. Kowallec said.

The FamCamp complex includes a central service facility that features washers and dryers, restrooms, showers and a utility room. Nearby is a two-story Scout Hut equipped with a picnic area. In the past, Mr. Flores explained, scouts have camped out at the site’s ten rustic lodges that are converted C-5 Galaxy nosecones.



Photos by Rudy Purificato

Outdoor Recreation manager Larry Flores inspects a Scout hut rustic lodge. The hut was converted from a C-5 Galaxy nosecone.

Customers can also rent outdoor recreation’s three picnic pavilions. Two are located on The Hill complex and the other is adjacent to the base swimming pool.

Bargain hunters can also store their vehicles at two RV storage lots located on the old flight line. The lots are located next to outdoor recreation’s mini-storage site available for rent by contacting Laura Martinez at 536-2881.

One of the most popular outdoor recreation assets is the so-called ‘lemon lot’ located at the intersection of Challenger Road

and Outer Circle and across from Eisenhower Bank. “For a \$10 monthly fee, you can sell your vehicle there. The vehicles do sell quickly,” Mr. Flores said.

Customers who prefer to wash rather than sell their vehicles can do so for a dollar at outdoor recreation’s two-stall car wash. Also known as Bldg. 1157, the car wash is located near the old flight line and next to outdoor recreation’s headquarters in Bldg. 1154, where a variety of camping and sporting gear is available for rent.

Former NBA coach helms Academy basketball team

By Jerry Cross

Air Force Academy athletic media relations

After having just four head coaches in the first 48 years of the program, the Air Force men’s basketball team enters the 2005-06 campaign with its third head coach in as many seasons. Jeff Bzdelik takes over the Falcons after a 15-year run of scouting and coaching in the NBA.

Bzdelik, who most recently was the head coach of the Denver Nuggets for two and a half seasons, brings a persona as a defensive-minded leader. He engineered one of the biggest turnarounds in NBA history during his second season with the Nuggets in 2003-04, leading the team to the playoffs for the first time since 1994-95 while posting a 43-39 record. The 26-game improvement over the previous year is the sixth-best improvement in NBA history. Bzdelik also became the first coach in league history (since the adoption of an 82-game schedule) to guide a team to the playoffs a year after winning less than 20 games.

In his first season, Bzdelik earned NBA-wide praise for Denver’s competitiveness, work ethic and never-give-up attitude. Despite having the youngest team in franchise history,

Bzdelik’s team shattered the franchise record for scoring defense by more than 5.0 points per game, giving up only 92.4 per outing. In addition, the Nuggets led the league in turnovers forced (17.1 per game) and had six of the top 12 marks for single-season scoring defense.

Scoring defense is not a major area of concern for Air Force as it captured its third consecutive national scoring defense title last season, allowing just 54.3 points per game. An area of concern for Bzdelik, however, is the field-goal percentage by AFA’s opponents. While leading the nation in points allowed, the Falcons ranked 314th (out of 326) by allowing their opponents to shoot 47.7 percent from the field. The percentage was even higher (47.9 percent) in the 14 MWC games.

Another area of concern for Bzdelik is how to replace senior center Nick Welch, who will miss the entire 2005-06 season after receiving a medical turnback from the Academy following a pair of surgeries this past off-season. Welch, the 2004 MWC co-player of the year, finished second on the team in scoring (12/game) and rebounding (3.6/game) en route to a selection on the all-MWC second-team. Welch will still get to

play another year for the Falcons, however, as he was granted a ninth semester by the school and will be eligible for the 2006-07 campaign.

So far, Welch hasn’t been missed, as the Falcons are off to a 6-1 start. Most recently, the Falcons knocked off service academy rival Navy 64-55 in Annapolis, Md.

Leading the way on the court for the Falcons this season is senior co-captain Antoine Hood. Hood led the team, and all MWC juniors, in scoring last by averaging 13 points per game. In seven games this season, he is averaging a team-high 14 points per game. With 22 rebounds and seven steals, he is also a threat defensively.

The remaining group of starters are all juniors — Matt McCraw, Jacob Burtschi, Dan Nwaelele and John Frye. McCraw and Burtschi played in every game last season and were all-MWC honorable mentions. Both players rank in the top 20 in the Mountain West in scoring this year, while McCraw ranks 12th overall in field goal percentage.

Burtschi was the team’s leading rebounder last year and is banging the boards again this season. He is averaging 6.5 rebounds per game, which ranks seventh in the MWC. He is solid on defense as well, leading the league with 19 steals. The rugged forward is also showing a sleek scoring touch, posting 11.3 points per game this season, third best on the team.

Although Nwaelele missed eight games last season from an Academy suspension, he hasn’t missed a beat this year and is one of the team’s top scoring threats. With 10.3 points per game, he is one of four players on the team averaging double figures in scoring.



Courtesy photos

Jeff Bzdelik enters his first season as head coach of the Air Force Academy’s men’s basketball team. Bzdelik most recently coached the NBA’s Denver Nuggets.

McCraw and Nwaelele are the team’s best long-range threats this season. The duo has combined to shoot 50 percent (25-of-50) from beyond the arc.

The sophomore class is headed by guard Tim Anderson, who played in 28 of the Falcons’ 30 games a year ago. Anderson is first off the team’s bench and is averaging more than 16 minutes of playing time per game.

The four other sophomores on the roster, Adam Hood, Eric Kenzik, Keith Maren and Chris Swan, played a total of 20 games last season.

The Falcons look to keep its four-game winning streak alive tomorrow, when the team faces Texas Pan American. The team kicks off its league schedule Jan. 5 at home against BYU.



The Falcons, led by scoring leader and team co-captain Antoine Hood, is off to a 6-1 start under a new head coaching staff.



HSG triathlon club seeks base athletes

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

No matter what shape you’re in, there is room for you on the Human Systems Group triathlon club that seeks to challenge base athletes by testing their physical endurance.

Formed in August, the club has attracted more than 20 athletes from various base organizations who train together by participating in triathlon’s three events: swimming, cycling and running.

“The club appeals to novices. We’re not pushing races on anyone. Most people join us because they want to get into shape. They accomplish it by doing the triathlon training,” said 1st Lt. Richard Whiting, club founder who is an HSG program manager.

Novice club members usually start out with what Whiting called sprint distances: swimming 400 meters (one-quarter mile), biking 10 miles and running five kilometers (3.1 miles). More advanced participants are involved with Olympic distances: 1,500 meter swim (less than a mile), 10K run and biking 26 miles (40K).

Training sessions are held periodically. “We’ve had a few training sessions at the base pool

and plan more at the Fort Sam Houston (indoor) pool. Most people definitely need a lot of work on their stroke. Our workouts include standard freestyle strokes,” said Lieutenant Whiting, a former member of the Air Force Academy triathlon team.

Typically, swimming is the first triathlon event, followed by biking and ending with a marathon. Whiting had previously started a triathlon club at Harvard University as a graduate student.

“Most triathletes are (primarily) runners. I grew up swimming (a lot),” admits the Columbia, S.C. native who later channeled that interest into triathlon. Last year, he ran the Boston Marathon in 3 hours, 27 minutes. While Whiting is no Lance Armstrong, he and club members are trying to perfect their cycling skills on Saturdays during long bike rides of over 60 miles.

“Beginners go on short 20 mile bike rides to get comfortable with cycling for an hour and a half. They start to develop muscles (needed for cycling). After a couple of 20-mile rides, it’s not hard to transition to longer rides,” Lieutenant Whiting said, admitting that it’s still a lot of hard work. Each triathlon event taxes different sets of muscles.



Photo by Rudy Purificato

1st Lt. Richard Whiting, a program manager for the Human Systems Group, founded the HSG triathlon club in August. The club has grown to more than 20 athletes from various base organizations.

The sport originated in 1972 when the San Diego Track Club used it to train runners preparing for marathons. Triathlons today typically feature a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike race and a marathon (26.2 miles).

“We work on endurance. All workouts are self-paced,” Whiting said about club participation. The only club requirement is that members procure their own mid-level road bikes.

For more information contact Lieutenant Whiting at 536-2221. Members are put on a club mailing list.

MSG hopes to repeat as intramural hoop champs

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Should they accomplish what they did last season, the Mission Support Group intramural basketball team will make Brooks sports history.

The MSG squad tied a base record in March when they became only the fourth team in history here to be undefeated during the regular 2004-05 season and postseason tournament. Remarkably, they accomplished the feat with just six players on their roster.

Only the 1982 and 1997 Air Base Group intramural hoop clubs and the 1998 Armstrong Laboratory team had perfect records. If MSG has another undefeated year, they will become the only Brooks sports team to have done it in consecutive seasons.

“We’re going to be a better, more powerful team than last year’s championship team,” said Tim ‘Shug’ Martin, who contributed to MSG’s “Cinderella season” as a guard/forward. Martin, a Brooks fitness center specialist, said MSG has rebuilt its roster with a lot more perimeter shooters. “We didn’t have that many shooters

last season. While we lost our center, Slim Bailey, we’ll be stronger offensively,” he said.

Returning veterans include point guards Marshall Harris and the ‘ageless’ and still nimble 53-year-old player-coach Hosea Talbert, former Brooks men’s varsity basketball team head coach. They will be supported by veteran shooting guard Frank Hayden and small forward/shooting guard Roderick Bryant.

Newcomers includes 6-4 center Steve Diaz and small forward Alfonso Smith. Martin believes having a reliable bench will be an advantage for the team this season, since they only had one reserve last year and still managed to win the hoop crown without losing a game.

League play began Tuesday and features the same six teams that competed last season. They include two teams from the 68th Information Operations Squadron, one led by veteran coach Reggie Smith; the Human Systems Group led by Damion Byrd who is also Brooks men’s varsity team head coach; the AFIOH, led by veteran player-coach Rick Peterson and the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine.

League games are played on Tuesdays and Thursday at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the fitness center gym. A double-elimination base championship tournament follows the end of the regular season in late January.

Most people join us because they want to get into shape. They accomplish it by doing the triathlon training.

1st Lt. Richard Whiting

Founder of the Human Systems Group triathlon club